

THE TEN-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD IS [NOT] A BASIC PLANNING UNIT FOR HAPPINESS IN EGYPT

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Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between inhabitants' happiness and the right to the city in the status quo of Egyptian neighborhoods. Although services are easily accessible, by ten-minute walks in a suitable ambience, happiness is not achieved. The research aims to, first, review the literature that provides a guideline for ten-minute neighborhoods. Second, this study conducts a comparative content analysis of recent online articles on the right to the city. Third, the study tests findings from Egyptian neighborhood settings. The idea of a ten-minute neighborhood is manageable. The hypothesis concerns a compliant design. It is a logical assumption that people who live within ten minutes walking distance of essential facilities in their area can minimize several problems and maximize a healthy lifestyle. The supposed issue causes the right to the city to affect the relationship between ten-minute neighborhoods and citizens' happiness. This assumption can be established through site observation and oriented questionnaires. This paper contributes by presenting new planning units that suit the current context of the old cities in the Middle East and North Africa region, based on walking distances of ten minutes or less with reference to the right to the city. This planning unit can result in citizens' happiness.

Keywords: Happiness; Ten-minute Neighborhood; Urban Design; Well-being

INTRODUCTION

In Western communities, neighborhoods have been significant places for decades, especially in terms of social, economic, and political exclusion processes and civil society initiatives that attempt bottom-up strategies for redevelopment and regeneration. In many circumstances, these efforts have resulted in the creation of socially innovative organizations, seeking to provide the fundamental human needs of deprived cultural groups, on the one hand, and citizens' well-being on the other (Oktay & Bala, 2015, pp. 203, 210). In Egypt, the neighborhood can be clearly identified as a basic planning unit in the seven regions' new towns throughout several of their twenty-seven governorates. In Cairo, the capital, the basic planning unit is the *Shiyakhaa*, which is bigger in size and involves a walking distance longer than a neighborhood.

The present research investigates whether the old cities or the new communities are happier, based on how both groups adapt the two basic planning units. This manuscript considers a design approach to achieve the concept of happiness in Egyptian cities. The idea of ten-minute neighborhoods is manageable and the hypothesis concerns a compliant design. It is a logical assumption that people who live within a ten-minute walking distance of essential facilities in their area can minimize several problems and thus maximize a healthy lifestyle. The supposed issue causes the right to the city to affect the relationship between ten-minute neighborhoods and citizens' happiness. This assumption can be established through site observation and oriented questionnaires. This paper contributes by presenting new planning units that suit the existing context of the old cities in the Middle East and North Africa region, based on walking distances of ten minutes or less with reference to the right to the city. This planning unit can lead to citizens' happiness.

Research Justification: Is Cairo a Happy City?

The justification for this research is based on observations made during the author’s daily trips in Cairo. She began to observe citizens’ behavior as being an action within and reaction to the built environment. These observations were followed by a survey by an interviews* in 2014. The interviews’ aim was to obtain information about the initial observations. The selection of the interviewees is illustrated in Figure 1 twenty-five individuals were selected randomly from each district (Table 1). The research districts were selected based on their similar periods of construction. In addition, this investigation assumes that Egyptians feel happy based on their religious beliefs.

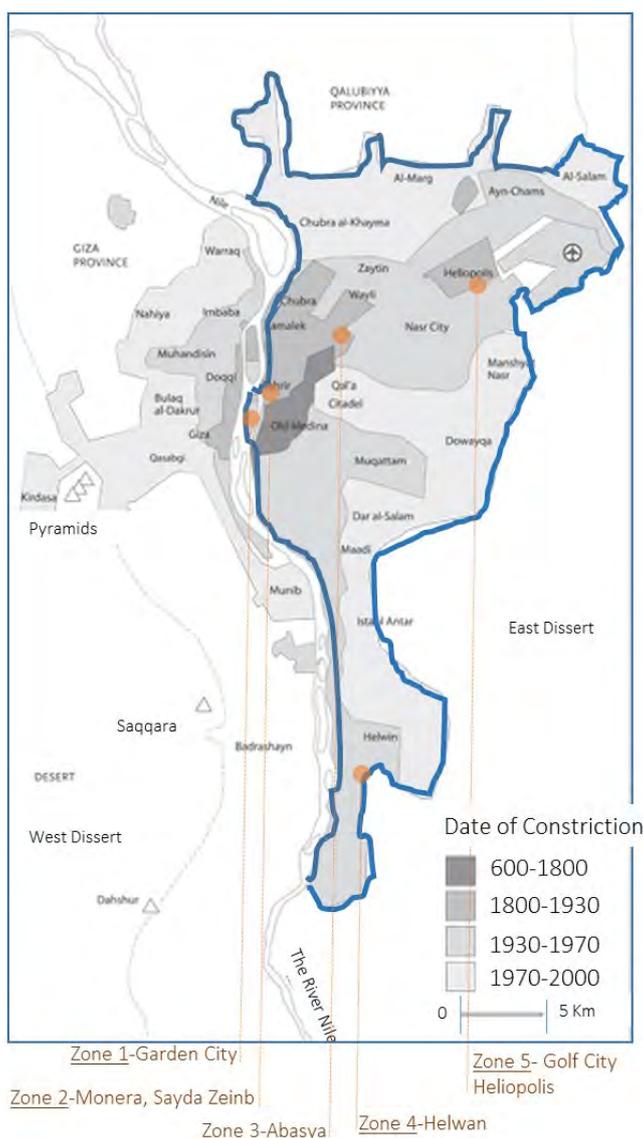


Figure 1. The locations of interviewee samples. The blue line represents the administrative borders of Cairo city (Source: Author).

* <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PZF3W6B>

Table 1: The interview results in the five-selected area each zone is represented in 5x5 squares. The total percentage is in green, (Source: Author).

Interview Questions	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5	125 Total
Q1: How often do your environment help you to share your feelings and ...						64 (51%)
Sum	51%					
Q2: I know what my strengths through relations with neighbors and virtues are and I use creatively to improve the quality of life.						88 (70%)
Sum	70%					
Q3: I find a deep sense of fulfilment in my life by using my strengths and skills of participation towards a purpose greater than myself.						78 (62%)
sum	62%					
Q4: How often do you walk, at least 20 minutes, as physical exercise?						25(20%)
Sum	20%					
Q5: I engage in outdoor activities that I find challenging and absorbing						58 (46%)
	46%					
Q6: While walking around my area, I am able to focus on the present moment and do not get distracted the past /future.						76 (60%)
Sum	60%					
Q7: I am optimistic about the future in my city and I have feelings of gratitude towards people and ex events.						36 (29%)
Sum	29%					

The current research selects the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) with a modifications to adequate the research interest (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). It is a four-item scale, measuring global subjective happiness. The scale requires participants to use absolute ratings to characterize themselves as happy or unhappy individuals, as well as it asks to what extent they identify themselves with descriptions of happy and unhappy individuals. The outcomes of the interviews conclude that subjective well-being (SWB), including money and mental health, depends on a broad range of interactions with entire communities rather than only on touchable physical factors. Admittedly, Sonja Lyubomirsky concludes in her book *The How of Happiness* that 50 percent of a given human's happiness level is genetically determined (based on twin studies), 10 percent is affected by life circumstances and situation, and a remaining 40 percent of happiness is subject to self-control (Lyubomirsky S. , 2008). Additionally, social interaction between citizens plays a significant role in supporting the SWB. The middle class areas, such as the third and fourth zone, have a strong relationship between citizens which may give a rational, happy life despite being suffering from urban problems. Walking in most Cairo's streets does not enhance the ability to do physical activities which have a direct impact on the person's mood. The survey offers a new twist. It doesn't precisely measure how happy the person is presently but instead explores what people are doing that is well related to various correlates of psychological well being, or what could unscientifically call 'Seven Habits of Happy People' (Covey, 1989) in a community (Figure 2). For the sake of full disclosure, it was designed by the researcher through this manuscript. It is more of an instrument than a psychometric one, offering respondents insight into how people can improve their life skills with the inclusion of neighborhood social life.



Figure 2. The seven habits of happy people and its relation to the interview questions, (Source: Author).

Research Questions and Limitations

This research aims to follow the question raised by several previous studies (Bluyssen, 2014), (Bramley, Brown, Dempsey, & Power, 2010), (Diener, Subjective Well-Being: The Science of Happiness and a Proposal for a National Index, 2000), (Hagerty, 2000), and (Jaffe, 2013) regarding the possibility of engaging different specializations to provide people with pleasurable and meaningful experiences and thereby positively influencing their happiness. This work is

based on several questions, starting with whether there is a difference in the progression of structural units of Egyptian urban planning and design. However, happiness is considered here as a means rather than an end in normative arguments for increasing well-being. Happiness is insufficient to of the neighborhood unit in traditional Egyptian cities and in its presence in new cities. Does this difference make inhabitants in new communities happier than those who reside in traditional areas? Alternatively, is there a reason why Egyptian citizens in both new and traditional areas do not feel happy even when there are neighborhood units available that may make them feel happy? This assumption leads to the most pressing question: What are the reasons for Egyptian citizens not feeling happy even with a neighboring unit? Moreover, it is worthwhile to restructure core units that create happy neighborhoods to determine the causes of this loss of happiness. This investigation sets out to search for a design approach to achieve the concept of happiness in Egyptian cities.

LITERATURE REVIEW: HAPPINESS AND OBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Happy people not only know that happiness is a choice, but also that it is a reaction to the present conditions of a community. Happiness is an attainable state. Happy people have eliminated the type of thinking that makes them wait for everything to be precise and right before they can find joy in life (Becker, 2013). Happiness depends upon a person's characteristics as well as on a community's feelings toward that person's context (Adams, 1992), (Hagerty, 2000, p. 764). "For years, urban designers and architects have claimed happiness as their goal" (Jaffe, 2013). Montgomery (2014) stated, "And yet none of the claims have been supported by empirical evidence. Which isn't to say they're not right. It's just to say that we don't know. That we have not known." It is important to clarify what we mean when we use the terms "happiness," "well-being," "SWB," and "life satisfaction," among others. These terms are often used interchangeably in economics literature, while psychologists take much more care in distinguishing the nuances between them. The nascent discussion on policy and national well-being indicators, meanwhile, forces more definitional clarity precisely because the differences in the meaning of these terms could have vastly different policy implications (Michalos, 2014, p. 4257). Human well-being affects outcomes of interest, such as make the case for well-being (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2013, p. 55) (Petermans & Pohlmeier, 2014). The determination of SWB is often assumed to be limited to measuring "happiness." In particular, SWB comprises a wider assortment of thoughts, rather than just happiness. For the limits of these different works, a relatively broad definition of SWB is used. SWB is interpreted as the positive mental states, including all positive and negative evaluations, that people create during their lives, and their affective reactions to their experiences (Diener, Subjective Well-Being: The Science of Happiness and a Proposal for a National Index, 2000) (Diener & Tov, National Accounts of Well-Being, 2012) (OECD, 2013).

The concept of UN-Habitat provides a better understanding of the objective benefits of increasing happiness, which helps to place happiness at the center stage in policy making and to refine policy evaluation (Aknin, Dunn, & Norton, 2012). This matches the objective of overcoming obstacles in the creation of better urban places, except by happy accident, unless we have a reasonable grasp of how built forms are produced (Bentley, 2002, p. 7). Happiness has a unique character and community characteristics (Adams, 1992) (Hagerty, 2000) that are highly dependent on social relationships, coherence, and local amenities. There is a growing awareness that social bonds may be shaped by characteristics of the built and social environment (Putnam, 1995), (Talen, 1999), (Duany, Speck, & Lydon, 2009), (Wilson, 2012). These social bonds, in turn, may help overcome community threats that could diminish residents' happiness and weaken their social cohesion. Montgomery reflected in an interview (Vossen, 2014) that the recipe for a happy city is how it fits the psychological focus and needs of the people who experience life inside that city. When acquainted with psychology, brain science, economics, and public health, the procedure to societal happiness is a simple account of just seven elements:

- Feeling safe and secure.
- Feeling healthy (interestingly, feeling healthy is more important than actually being healthy).
- Experiencing more pleasure than pain.
- Feeling a sense of equality and inclusion.
- Feeling free and empowered.
- Having economic security (money matters for happiness).
- Having strong positive social connections.

Since the 1990s, different studies and experiments have been attempting to analyze and determine what produces happiness. Scholarly articles have been written about this happiness legend, and the knowledge accumulated has been assembled under the umbrella term of “happiness studies.” Scholars involved in happiness studies have mostly been behavioral economists, psychologists, and sociologists, confused by how the everyday decisions that people make change their future lives and their feelings of well-being. A study from the University of Wisconsin observed that, on average, residents are more likely to be happier when there are green spaces in their neighborhood. The study’s conclusions were based on a state-wide public health survey of over 2,500 inhabitants of 229 cities and towns, who answered questions about their levels of distress, anxiety, and stress. Their replies were then scaled according to an index of plants per square mile in their district. The study’s most remarkable finding was possibly the fact that happiness was connected more with green space than with socioeconomic status. Participants living in blocks with 10% fewer green areas than the standard amount were more likely to report stress and depression. Pursuing this deduction, a “poor” citizen living in an area with more trees and open space would be happier than a “rich” resident living in an area with no access to green spaces.

Another study from University of Exeter in the United Kingdom applied 18 years of review data from over 10,000 participants across the United Kingdom. The investigation found a definite relationship between access to green spaces, self-reported well-being, and even physical health. The researchers even detected that the sensations associated with living close to green spaces brought feelings and levels of satisfaction similar to those experienced when getting a new job or getting married. While this may seem to be a normal experience, there is no harm in reinforcing it: green spaces in urban centers are essential for creating healthy, livable cities. While most urban residents have been aware of this relationship for years, it is relatively new—and quite promising—to have both qualitative and quantitative studies to back it up. Some studies have demonstrated the positive impact that access to urban nature can have on the levels of people’s social interaction, and ultimately on the strength of social ties between neighbors (Michalos, 2014, p. 4267).

The basic recipe for urban happiness is drawn from the insights of philosophers, psychologists, neuroscientists, and happiness economists. What should a city accomplish after it meets the basic needs of food, shelter, and security? To answer this question, Montgomery (2014, pp. 40-41) provided seven keywords for urban happiness: joy, health, freedom, justice, social interaction (conviviality), common fate, and economic affairs. Montgomery (2014) offered a structured survey of some of the big mistakes that underpin this design and planning, and that have produced unsustainable urban sprawl and convivial lives. Another research from the UK presents the results of eight elements of composite measures that capture the different aspects of social sustainability, as defined above: pride and attachment, interaction, safety, environment satisfaction with home, stability vs mobility, and participation in collective/group activity (Bramley, Brown, Dempsey, & Power, 2010, p. 112), (Tezgelen, 2014, p. 82). Although social interaction was deemed the most important factor in studies of happiness, Montgomery (2014) concluded, based on a Swedish study (Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, 2014), that a long daily commute has a severe negative impact on our happiness. Residents seemed willing to support

density for improving their happiness through increasing along commercial corridors, but not in residential areas. Emily Talen mentions (Talen, 2008, pp. 100-101), 'We want to get enough density to support a Starbucks'. A city planner assigned to Portage Park said that residents there were 'fine with chains' – they just wanted their retail district to be strong." Figure 3 represents the inverse/indirect relationship between happiness and different elements in the city scales. Residents seemed willing to support density increases along commercial corridors, but not in residential areas. The ability to sustain a walkable environment help residents to have a kind of physical activities outside their homes. Empirical studies have demonstrated that users will frequent public space most often if they can walk to it, and, if it is within 3–5 minutes walking distance from their residence or workplace (Kaplan & S. Kaplan, 1989).

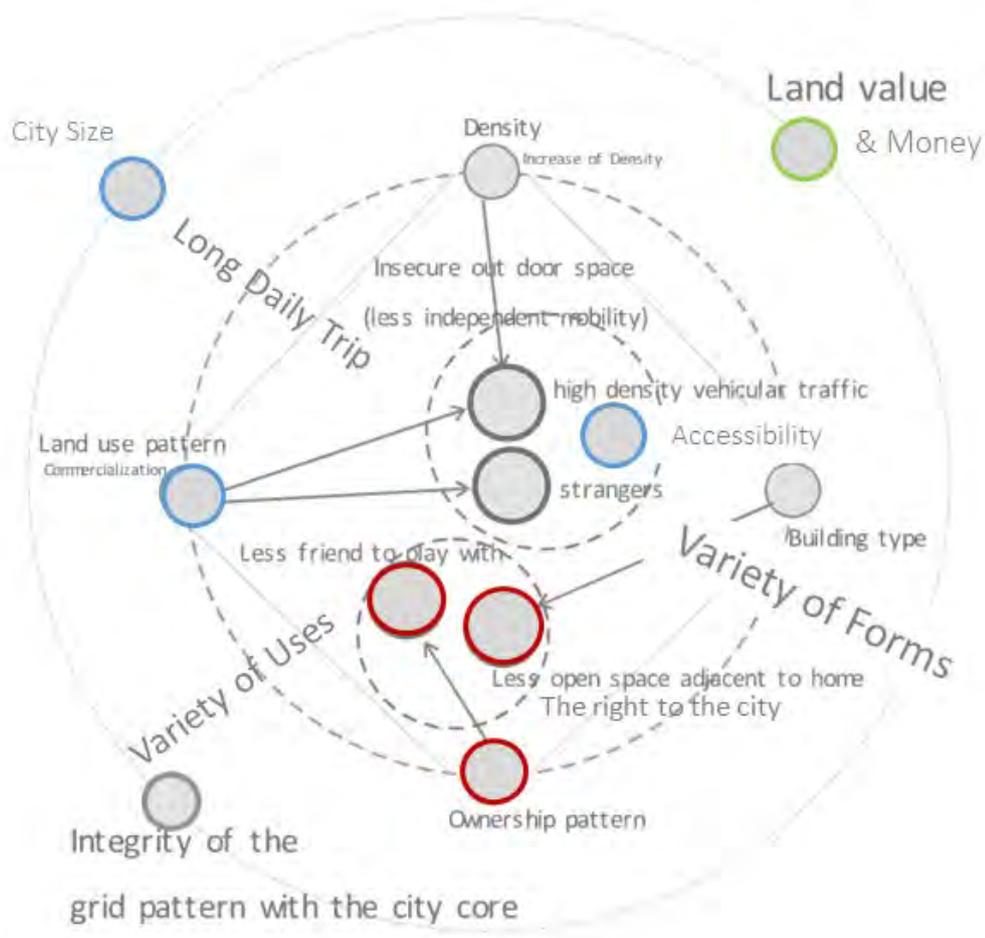


Figure 3. The inverse/indirect relationship between happiness and different elements in the city scales. The red color is supposed to refer to the social factors; the blue is for the built environment; and the green for is the human physical appeal. (Source: Author).

The Notion of Ten-Minute Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are places of social, economic, and political segregation processes (Allaire, 1960, p. 8), and where civil society initiatives attempt bottom-up strategies of redevelopment and regeneration (Moulaert, Martinelli, Swyngedouw, & González, 2010). In many circumstances, these efforts are produced as part of the creation of socially innovative organizations that seek to provide basic human needs for deprived cultural groups. They also try to increase their political

capabilities and improve social interaction internally and among the local communities, the wider urban society, and the political world.

In 1936, Clarence Perry presented the idea of societal correlation between residential areas. This represents the “residential neighborhood” as a basic planning and design unit and, with its various repetitions, the district’s competence and subsequently the city. The paradigm is to create a safe and healthy physical environment: “To create spatial community, not merely residential areas” (Rofe, 1995, p. 108), (Kim, Park, & Wang, November 2015, p. 49). This is “used to refer both to a physical place and to the group of people who occupy that place” (Caves, 2005, p. 482). It is very important because “they provide one of the gateways to the social life of cities” (Rofe, 1995, p. 120). It is also known as “a social/spatial unit of social organization” (Hunter, 1979, p. 270) where, according to the theory of urbanism, “the available knowledge is concerning the city as a social entity” (Wirth, 1938, p. 8). Moreover, it is “one of the major landmarks in twentieth-century urban planning” (Patricios, 2002, p. 21). In American communities, it “was taken for granted” (Patricios, 2002, p. 26) and the basic idea of the local communities is based on “social interaction, common ties, and co-residency” (Taylor, 1997, p. 3). Perry developed his concept of planning and designing neighborhoods based on the following six factors: “Clear boundaries, the character of the internal street system, the social interaction in the streets themselves, the types of land uses, the presence of the central areas, and the provision of open space” (Patricios, 2002, p. 23). The city is a synthesis composed of smaller units; in other words, a cluster.

Critical commentary of the neighborhood unit centered on its [mis]use as an instrument for the segregation of different social/economic groups by developers willing to utilize the gated-community aspects of the neighborhood units’ physical design for this purpose (Banerjee & Baer, 1984, pp. 1-11). Supporting this argument, Isaacs (1948) referred to examples of promotional material for new preplanned neighborhoods, as well as excerpts from government planning reports and information provided by social scientists, all of which championed the neighborhood unit as a bastion for the gentry, keeping the undesirables as well as through traffic out (Isaacs, 1948, p. 19). In February 1998, the Western Australia State Government identified the need to redress the impact of the conventional development planning policies that had facilitated car dependence and urban sprawl across the city of Perth to create more sustainable suburban communities, subsequently launching the “Livable Neighborhoods Community Design Guidelines” (LN) (Western Australian Planning Commission, 2007). The LN were based on the vision of New Urbanism, which originated from the Congress of New Urbanism (Hall & Porterfield, 2001), (The Congress of New Urbanism, 1996), (Porbunderwala & Taarup) to advocate mixed-use, pedestrian-orientated, compact developments, and human-scaled neighborhoods by means of eight elements to enhance quality of life. In other words, the guidelines provided a distinctive objective to investigate how a livable neighborhood within a ten-minute walking distance of local amenities would constitute a way to a better life. This could be regarded as the following objectives:

- Compact: livable neighborhoods conserve land and have sufficient density to support frequent transit services and neighborhood-serving businesses.
- Mixed use: livable neighborhoods provide a mix of housing, workplaces, and neighborhood-serving shops and services.
- Diverse: livable neighborhoods offer housing choices suited to all types of households and household incomes, provide a range of jobs, shops, and services, and support diverse local businesses.
- Healthy: livable neighborhoods support the physical and mental health of residents, are clean and safe, and promote social inclusion and sociability.

- Green: livable neighborhoods are well served by parks, playgrounds, plazas, and greenways. Trees and plantings are integrated into street designs. Buildings are designed to provide compact gardens, courtyards, terraces, and green roofs.
- Accessible: livable neighborhoods support car-free living by being well connected to citywide and regional destinations through sustainable transportation modes (walking, cycling, public transit, paratransit, and taxis). Streets and public transits are designed for universal accessibility.
- Sustainable: livable neighborhoods use natural resources and energy sparingly and efficiently, and generate little waste.

WHAT ELEMENTS SHOULD BE SELECTED FROM OTHER CITIES TO BUILD A HAPPY CITY IN EGYPT?

If Egyptian planners and urban designers are to consider the social function of a happy city, Copenhagen would be recommended. A good example from that city is the fact that traffic planners, when they realized that cyclists were having a hard time chatting on their way to work, decided to build double-width lanes. It is thought that a happy city is actually a rational market; a good example of this is Vauban, an experimental suburb of Freiburg, Germany. Here, the external costs associated with car ownership are internalized. If a person owns a car in Vauban, he/she has to buy a parking spot at the edge of the village, in the form of a beautiful garage. Not only do many residents save money, but their days are infused with these convivial experiences of local walking. Another remarkable example is found in Davis, California; on N Street, neighbors pulled down all their fences and agreed to share one large yard. They found it so spacious that they all applied and were granted the right to add more units to their homes, so that more people could live there.

Proposal for a Happy Ten-Minute Neighborhood Methodology

The suggested methodology for citizens' SWB or happiness is determined by three core groups of factors, as illustrated in (Figure 3). The three groups are associated with built environment (in blue), social interaction (in red), and human physical appeal (in green). Most of these factors have a direct relationship with happiness, apart from the factors of being in a big city, care dependency, and long daily social interaction, which are inversely related with happiness. For example, more daily interaction between citizens in the same neighborhood leads to negative interaction between residents. The following section examines these groups of factors for Cairo.

Discussion: Detection of SWB Indicators for Ten-Minute Neighborhoods

The scale of the factor of happiness and SWB in the communities investigated in Egypt first represents citizens in bigger cities, where there are more services available. This can be compared to the above-mentioned unwillingness of interviewees to move to other places outside of Cairo and indeed to the dream of some of the other interviewees to move to Cairo. The second and third factors that most affected citizens' happiness were car ownership and access to vital places, respectively. The green places came lowest on the scale of happiness demands. Although most international researchers mention the importance of green areas in improving SWB, people living in areas that lack green spaces avoid giving a clear explanation of this matter, and call it an option of luxury. Other studies mention that they have not yet investigated this, but they suggest that access to green spaces would be an improvement. People who live close to suitable green spaces also came lowest on the scale of happiness demands, based on the green areas in private zones. This can be explained by their unwillingness to have social interaction with people from different social classes. They also prefer segregation between multi-economic classes.

In general, as can be concluded from the interviews, the interviewees could be divided into the following sections: the first and largest section of interviewees considers happiness to be

a kind of well-being and luxury, which is more than what they can afford to change or manage. Specifically, the problem of happiness has a direct effect caused by the process of urban planning and the design of cities and towns. In Egypt, this process may not prioritize the well-being of citizens through [new] developing projects. The second section of interviewees regards happiness as essential for human beings. This group blames planners and designers for the bad situations and chaos in Cairo's streets. These Cairenes also consider it the planners' task to provide them with a better life, a safe environment, separated from those of different social classes. They appreciate the separation of communities, which offers them more happiness. Concerning the increasing numbers and size of informal communities in Cairo, the interviewees considered this a result of immigration from rural to urban areas. The third section of interviewees, who live in deteriorating areas, consider themselves happy despite suffering from shortages of or deteriorating services in their area. Moreover, they have to commute to reach their daily services.

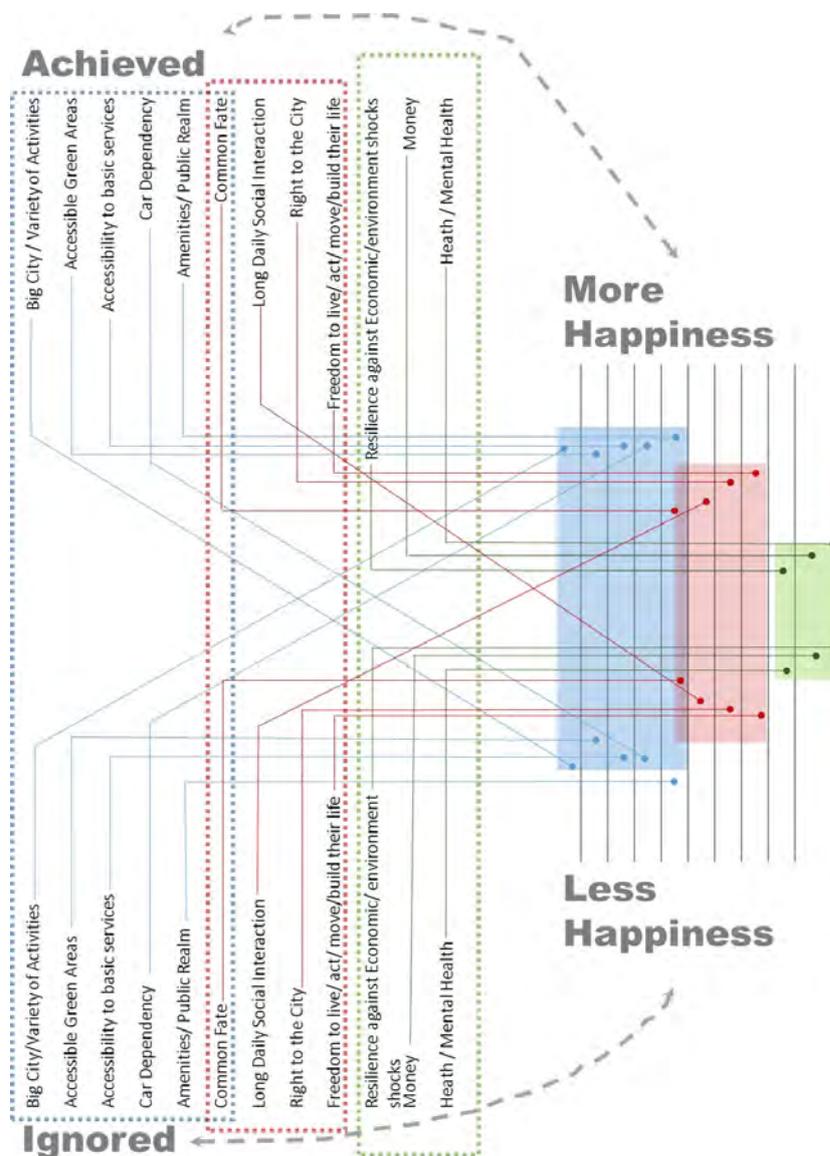


Figure 3. The proposed module (Source: the author)

Additionally, the interviewees have a deep belief that happiness is attainable in the lives to which they are accustomed or afterwards. The interviews conducted also showed that living in a bigger city may make people happier than living in smaller settlements, new towns, or in suburban communities. This outcome differs from the conclusions drawn by international studies (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2013), (Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, 2014). This is because the bigger communities in Egypt feature a broad range of accessible facilities and services, despite being located in a chaotic context. Some of the interviewees also mentioned that living in an old context makes them happier than living in a new one. In a contemporary sense, the chaotic context provides various answers to the question of whether or not citizens are in the urban chaos. To achieve social connectivity, planners may concentrate on the alternative routes and entree points that can be designed by improving street connections. They may attract attention to the size and form of blocks, which define both the urban space interface and the corresponding patterns of movement. It is recognized that large-scale blocks, cul-de-sacs and dendritic (tree-like) street systems are less likely to provide good connectivity.

This different answer may refer to people's socioeconomic base. People living further down the socioeconomic scale regard a calm context as a sign of isolation that negatively affects their happiness. The present author noticed that the larger the size of the car that people owned, the happier they were. Additionally, the more dependent people were on public transportation, the less happy they were. This is also different according to the national standard of achieving SWB (Caves, 2005) (Bluyssen, 2014). The faces of drivers on Cairo's main roads frequently reflect sadness and dissatisfaction during rush hours, compared to Fridays and vacation days. In different Western communities, "[C]ars are happiest when there are no other cars around. People are happiest when there are other people around" (Project for Public Spaces, 2015). The high dependency on a private car also refers to the problems that pedestrians face while walking, such as sexual harassment, unsuitable sidewalks, and high crime rates.

In conclusion, happiness in Egyptian cities is not an issue of anxiety. This relies on the majority's belief that what is happening in their area is better than what could happen elsewhere. This point of view may change after a person moves to Europe, for example, for a short visit. The gradation of points that make up a citizen's happiness goes as follows: ease of access to services, ease of access to daily commutes, and good designs of outdoor space for children and elderly people to participate in various social activities. In addition to providing this outdoor space, the freedom and safety to act and carry out several activities in this space rank as priorities for the middle class. The results of the interview also recommend cleaning, lighting, and beautiful streets. A silent environment represents an outstanding position to achieve happiness.

CONCLUSION: POLICY FOR A HAPPY CITY WITH THE TEN-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD AS A BASIC PLANNING UNIT

Cities in Egypt can apply their living streets policy to support happiness along all pathways within a ten-minute walk. These involve operations, maintenance, new construction, reconstruction, retrofits, repaving, rehabilitation, or changes in the allocation of pavement space of existing roadways. The objective is to include privately built roads intended for public use. This public use should be accommodated with attention to the right to the city and the fair distribution between inhabitants. Livable streets may be achieved by means of single projects or, incrementally, through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. Small communities could draw on all sources of transportation funding to implement living streets.

The aim of achieving livability in streets and happy communities should be included in all street development, reconstruction, repaving, and restoration/rehabilitation projects, except when one or more of the following conditions apply. First, if a project involves only ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in a serviceable condition, such as mowing grass, cleaning, sweeping, spot repairs, concrete joint repairs, or pothole filling, or when interim measures are implemented on a temporary detour or on haul routes. Second, if the *Shiyakhaa*

(district) Council releases a new or [re]development project due to the excessively disproportionate cost of establishing uncommon facilities, such as a bikeway, walkway, or transit enhancement that may need adoption within Arabian culture. Third, if city engineers and the director of the planning department jointly determine that the construction is not practically alternative and cost-efficient. On the one hand, the inefficiency is caused by the significant or adverse environmental impact on waterways, floodplains, and remnants of native vegetation, wetlands, mountainsides, or other critical areas. On the other hand, incompetence is caused by the impact on neighboring land uses, including right-of-way acquisitions.

In conclusion, communities can adopt designs for new living streets within a ten-minute walk of essential facilities. The living street policy guides the planning, funding, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of new and modified streets, while simultaneously remaining adaptable to the context of different streets, where sound planning experiences will produce context-sensitive designs. Cairo incorporates the street design guidelines' principles into all plans, manuals, rules, regulations, or programs for the city's districts, as is appropriate. Other cities can follow Cairo as the capital of Egypt, as they always do. Cities should provide well-designed pedestrian convenience in the form of sidewalks or shared-use pathways on all arterial, collector, and local streets. Streets within the ten-minute neighborhood should provide regular, convenient, and secure road intersections. These may be located at crossings designed to be pedestrian friendly or at mid-block locations where they are needed and appropriate. To establish a clean mode of transportation in Egypt, small, local communities can encourage youths and teenagers to use bicycles along well-designed avenues, boulevards, and connector streets. If physical conditions warrant it, cities can plant trees and manage street water whenever a street is newly constructed, reconstructed, or relocated. Cities should provide a plan for their streets that is harmonious with adjacent land uses and neighborhoods. This can be achieved with full input from local stakeholders. Cities should design their streets in harmony with natural features, such as waterways, slopes, and ravines. In general, communities should provide designs for their streets according to a powerful sense of place. Through this aim, development design can use architecture, landscaping, streetscape, public art, and signage to display the community, neighborhood, history, and natural setting of specific areas. Moreover, the sense of place is highly coordinated with merchants along main street corridors to develop vibrant retail districts.

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